

What Every Christian Needs to Consider Before They Celebrate Halloween

I got a shock today that disrupted my typically calm and rejuvenating morning walk. While praising God and enjoying the breathtaking autumn splendor, suddenly I saw a skull and hand bones piercing up out of the ground! Witches, tombstones, ghosts, spiders and snakes—all decorating someone's front lawn! Triggered and repulsed, I ran as fast as I could. *Why* do people think death and evil are fun, or humorous or worth celebrating? Do they not believe it is real, or do they just truly love it?

Personally, I enjoy dressing up and having fun. One of my most memorable Halloween costumes was in college when I dressed up as a sassy space alien, complete with green food coloring on my face. Smashing success and great fun—until I went to wash my face that night. Oops! Had to go back to school the next day with a lot of explaining to do. (Fun fact: Food coloring is as effective as using a Sharpie.)

Unfortunately, this holiday is an opportunity for many to feature the occult, death, evil, blood, skeletons, graveyards and numerous other ghoulish horrors. The exact opposite of all that we as Christ-followers celebrate every spring at Easter! The contrast is stark: evil versus good, death versus life, darkness versus light, deception versus truth, sadness versus joy, despair versus hope, fear versus peace and Satan versus Jesus.

In the absence of a solid source of *truth*, people have no reason not to celebrate something else. In the absence of a personal relationship with our Creator and Savior, people have no reason not to celebrate an imposter. Whatever feels good at

the time, and as long as it does not include God, too often wins out.

Without the truth and without the Savior, the tragedy is that it ends up unimaginably worse than any gruesome lawn decor could ever portray.

Ultimately each of us has to *choose* whom and what we celebrate—and that choice will carry us to one of only two eternal destinations: heaven or hell. In the book *Goodbye for Now*, I share many powerful Scripture promises. God's *truth*. There is hope for something beyond the grave for all who choose to believe and receive His free gift of forgiveness and eternal life. Now that is worth celebrating! Here are a few:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16, NIV).

“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him” (John 3:36).

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?’” (John 11:25-26).

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (John 14:6).

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death” (Heb. 2:14-15).

“God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of

God does not have life" (1 John 5:11-12).

"' My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am'" (John 14:2-3).

I hope we can all be more mindful during this season, and all year round, of who and what we choose to celebrate. Why? Because I can't imagine any other option as amazing as what our Lord offers! {eoa}

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